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THE CHRISTMAS STORY AND MODERN MAN

LIGHT AND THE WORD

By H. L. Short

IT is not easy for a modern man to take the Christmas story seriously. He finds it pretty but irrelevant. Some details can be adapted to the secular feast; "goodwill towards men" may justify Christmas cards. But most of the things we do at Christmas come from the Roman saturnalia and the Germanic yule, and have no Christian significance at all.

This makes our religious observances at Christmas rather pointless. After a surfeit of secular festivity we go to church to sing antiquated carols and read an obviously legendary story about angels, shepherds and kings, personages with whom we have little to do at other times, and the miraculous birth of a saviour. Its frequent lack of meaning may be guessed from the theme of many Christmas sermons, which are not about the special importance of the occasion, but run away from it into generalities about "the Christmas spirit all the year" or "every child a Christ-child".

The story does not fit into our modern picture of the world. According to the popular scientific world-picture, the real world is a material universe, infinitely extended in space and time, a complete system which is fully rational and interconnected mechanically and mathematically. Against such a background the birth of Jesus, as a historical event, is insignificant. As a legend it is unscientific.

Not More Helpful

But the popular religious or philosophical world-picture is no more helpful. This teaches that behind the space-time universe is the realm of spirit, giving it meaning, life and purpose. God is the ultimate reality, and truth, goodness and beauty the modes of his working. But why should one event, the birth of Jesus a long time ago, manifest the divine more than some other? Even as the origin of an important cultural institution, the Christian church, it is not very significant, for in nineteen centuries things have changed. And everyone knows that there are no angels, except in nativity plays.

But these popular world-pictures have largely been abandoned by scientists and philosophers. They no longer believe that "reality" is the space-time universe, with or without spiritual underpinning. A scientist only wishes to know whether the "language" of his branch of scientific enquiry is "true", i.e., whether the information it elicits is verifiable. Other branches of scientific enquiry overlap this; but this does not mean that all the sciences add up to a complete unified picture of reality. Sciences have different spheres of enquiry; the regularities sought by each branch do not add up to one universe. The laws of physics are mechanical or mathematical; the laws of sociology are statistical. A scientist does not deal with the meaning of a single event, but with the conclusions drawn from a number of similar events. The birth of Jesus is a speck against the immensities of space and time, but this does not exhaust its significance. It has other contexts.

Philosophers no longer seek a unified system of reality behind the physical universe. They, too, have turned their attention to language, enquiring whether the language used in this or that line of enquiry is reliable, whether this or that assertion is verifiable, i.e., referring to matters which can be tested and not dissipated in untestable affirmations. Alas, much of the language of traditional theology, liberal as well as orthodox, is found to be untrustworthy in this sense, being unverifiable speculation.

A New Aspect

This seems to offer a new aspect from which to regard Christmas. We are concerned to know where we stand, in the midst of this human situation, and what to do. We are helped by the sciences, different lines of enquiry producing information which can be tested; their languages, therefore, are true. But the language appropriate to man as a moral being is tested in a different way. It is not just information; it is concerned with how a man is oriented to his world, in what proportions things appear to him, and which way he is going. The active virtues, like courage, kindness and endurance, are as important as knowledge or wisdom. We need to know honestly what our situation is; we need also to be the kind of person who can deal with this situation. We cannot generalize this, as with scientific information; it is this person in this situation, and now.

But the occasion, though unique, is also typical. My situation is other men's situations, and I am Man. The language I use to clarify my situation to myself, and to communicate with others in like cases, is in terms of human personality. Its terms are dramatic and archetypal.

drawn from actual biography and the subconscious world of dreams. The figure of the Son of Man helps us to get our bearings and set our sights for action, not alone only but in company with others. In him we see where we are and what we must do and endure. This pattern fits our situation, enabling us to take the difficult step in thought from "is" to "ought" and in action from "ought" to "is". There are many divine words, and we must seek them and live by them; but this word made flesh is pre-eminent, clarifying our situation at so many points. Many of its details are legendary, larger and simpler than life, and drawn from the subconscious; but the story's roots are in actual human history. We do not invent the story; it challenges us and we choose it.

A Great Light

At Christmas we do not just recall a pretty tale about a baby; we celebrate the birth of the Son of Man, the light of the world. It has a much bigger context than angels, shepherds and kings; it elucidates the meaning of life. "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light . . . for unto us a son is born . . . and of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end. Fear not, Mary; behold, thou shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the son of the Most High; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. And she brought forth her first-born son, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. There were shepherds . . . and a multitude of the heavenly host . . . and wise men from the east . . . And Simeon said to Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the falling and rising again of many . . . yea, and a sword shall pierce through thine own soul also; that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. In him was light, and the light was the life of men. Light came into the world, and men loved the darkness better. He came to his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become sons of God. If any man is in Christ, he is created anew. For ye were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord; walk as children of light".

CHRISTMAS AT KHARANG

By G. Mabel Beames

(The Rev. G. Mabel Beames, of Godalming, Surrey, has recently returned from a twelve-months' stay in Kharang, Assam, with Margaret Barr.)

TO say "A merry Christmas!" to anyone at Kharang Rural Centre is almost superfluous, because life goes merrily there all—or nearly all—the time. That is one of the advantages of working among youngsters whose minds are not over-stimulated by the bustle and blare and glare that are so much a part of Western civilization; who enjoy running on the hills in sunshine and wind, and the feel of their bare feet on the earth, and to whom school lessons are an adventure. As is to be expected, it is Miss Barr herself, the most farseeing and responsible person there, who is most prone to moments of anxiety. More than once I have heard her say, though only half-seriously, "We go from crisis to crisis". The unexpected is always happening, so that it is improbable that any one Christmas is like another. Perhaps the 1957 season was more than usually eventful: I don't know. Here are my recollections of it, aided by diary notes.

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General background. Weather: bright sunshine with cold breeze. Frost early morning. School-hours occupied with examinations. Miss Barr knits as she adjudicates, and later has all the papers to mark. *December* 12: a messenger brings word of the death of Por's mother. It is typical of the difficulties of communication that no warning of the mother's illness preceded the news of her death. Accompanied by three older children, little Por goes home, a walk of seven miles, to be told the sad news when she gets there. Question: Will her relations send her back to school, or will they want her at home now to take care of the smaller brothers and sisters? *December* 13: big earth tremor in the night. *December* 14: Beit, a delicate but unusually intelligent 13-year-old, has been in bed several days with a high temperature. Acting at last on Miss Barr's advice, her parents arrive to take her to Shillong for hospital examination. Within a short time a carrier has constructed a bamboo ambulance chair. The tearful Beit is seated to this and mounted on his back, and the family depart.

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Sunday, December 15: messenger arrives to say two carriers bringing iron roof-sheeting to K.R.C., allegedly without a permit, have been put in gaol. Dean, who can ill be spared from his building and dispensary work, hurries off to Shillong to rectify the error and get the carriers released. Same day, 5 p.m., Miss Barr's voice from kitchen schoolroom: "Mabel, we've got an American visitor". Arrival of the Rev. Kenneth Smith. All off-duty time occupied during next three days in pow-wows in Miss Barr's sanctum. *December* 18: the two dogs, Rip and Teddy, well behaved alone, but mischievous when out together, chase and half-kill one of the geese. It was destined for the pot at Christmas, but had to be eaten earlier than planned. Evening of same day: Carol service in kitchen schoolroom, address by K. Smith, due to leave at dawn next day. *December* 20: grand washing of blankets in preparation for youth conference. Six Unitarians, possibly more, expected from Shillong, to stay several nights. A messenger brings mail in from Sinit. Hurrah! Evening: fun and games in kitchen schoolroom prior to departure next morning of all children who can be spared to spend Christmas at home. Three remain to carry on essential farmwork, etc., but will go home for a few days when others return. *Sunday, December* 22: Youth conference programme planned in detail on sunny verandah. The three remaining children play table games in evening. *December* 23: Miss Barr and I bake European-style cakes for expected visitors. (A long process on small oil heater with no oven.)

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December 24: Second (and last) goose killed for the feast. 3 p.m.: Arrival of young people from Shillong. Only three—and these can stay only one night. Disappointing after all the preparation. Others reported ill (coughs and colds are common in winter even in Assam) or detained by work, Christmas Day not being a general holiday in India. Programme must be drastically cut. Some items will be useful for second conference of young people from Jowai in January. *December* 25: Girls rise at 4 a.m. to cook rice for departing guests. Later they go in to the village to collect some friends for a midday tea-party at the Centre and to play open-air games. They return with about fifteen children, ages from 4 to 12. Blastin, the oldest schoolboy, returns, not having availed himself of the full holiday. Whether from a sense of duty to the farm or the pleasure of being at school, I don't know, but he is all smiles. Evening, same day: The girls are given permission to go to Kharang to watch the village dancing. They are escorted by Dean, known to the children as Uncle, and Blastin. Miss Barr and I stay at home and go to bed early, not even bothering to get out the gramophone and listen to records.

In the next few days the children returned, coming in twos and threes to Miss Barr's verandah to report their arrival, all obviously very happy to be back. Another Christmas was over. Starting with the tragedy of Por's bereavement, it included minor alarms and excursions and disappointments, yet

A village woman and her children—Kharang.

through it all the faith and courage and radiance of the Christmas feeling was never lost. I think it never is. It is an integral part of Kharang Rural Centre, and may be experienced there any day of the year.

FOOTNOTE.—Por's relations are allowing her to continue her education, and sent her back to school. Beit was pronounced free from suspected tuberculosis, returned joyfully to school, and her health has improved.

"MY FIRST CHRISTMAS"

By Kenneth Wright

(Mr. Kenneth Wright has just begun his first ministry at Hallowell Road, and Walmsley, Bolton.)

AT one's twenty-first birthday party, someone sooner or later is bound to ask, "Well, my boy, what does it feel like to be of age?" Faced with a question such as this, one can only answer, rather lamely, "I really haven't had time to think yet". One is in a similar position as a young minister. People are always asking one, either directly or by implication, "Well, what does it feel like to be a minister?" In this case, it is a real tragedy that one is forced to answer so often like a 21-year-old at his own party, "I really haven't had time to think yet".

After only five months in the ministry, the thing that really frightens me, especially as my first Christmas approaches, is the fact that the modern minister with two very active churches to look after can so very easily find himself with no time to think about the fundamental significances of his chosen way of life, which is after all, by the world's standards, a rather odd one, to say the least. How easy it is to get so tied up with the routines of visiting, taking services, and attending church social functions, that there is little time left for sitting down and having a really good think. Yet we do need to spend a major portion of our time thinking if we are going to be of any real service to our people. The bulk of humanity in the modern world has little time for the thinker. The man who thinks at all deeply is in danger of being regarded as mentally unstable. Even in Unitarian churches there are those who seem to dislike being called upon to think too deeply for themselves. There are those only too ready to hear the comfortable words of some false prophet of an easy salvation. There is, however, a great and wonderful hope in my heart. I have been staggered and overjoyed to discover what an interest most young people have in questions of theology. How eagerly the young will discuss one's theological sermons; how they scorn what they term "superficial running commentaries on world affairs". Whatever may be the faults of young people today, they are certainly willing to get down to some solid consideration of the meaning of life, birth, copulation, and death. Is this not the very stuff of true religion? In the halting discussions of our young people on essentially theological topics (though they may not realize it) lies the hope of our free religious faith—and perhaps of the world.

What then is the significance of Christmas, the second most important festival of the Christian Calendar, for me, and the young people with whom I am so often called upon to discuss "theology"?

We celebrate at Christmastide the birth of a baby who grew up to be one of the greatest disturbers the world has ever seen. So great a disturber did he turn out to be that the forces of orthodox respectability felt it necessary to nail him to the cross in an attempt to hush his "disturbing" message. We, too, live in an age which puts respectability before honesty of thought (yes, even in Unitarian churches very often). The recent Wolfenden Report is a testimony against society, especially the portion dealing with prostitution. (We don't mind what happens so long as our silly, petty, prudish, self-satisfied minds are not offended as we walk along the streets.)

Too many within the churches would like the minister to become a mere professional bolster for conventional respectability. As Christmas draws near, the question I ask myself over and over again is simply this: Shall I, down the years, have courage to follow Christ in the fullest sense, and when need arises be like him, a thorough disturber of the smug and oh! so respectable peace? But more important than this, shall I be able to encourage any of my people to take up the cross and follow Christ. The cross is heavy, the way is long. Not many of us are the least bit like Jesus Christ, least of all myself. Mostly I shall fail; the pressures of conventional society will usually be too strong for me. As a cynic once said, "You'll never make a fortune in the ministry, but *if you're a good boy* it's a fairly sure £500 a year and a roof over your head". That is all too true. My prayer at Christmas this year will be: "God, grant that through Thy grace I shall not *always* be the good boy!"

We shall all be helped if we remember that on Christmas Day we celebrate the birth of a man who could stand before the multitude and say—and mean: "Verily, I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the Kingdom of God before you".

MY MINISTRY

By Frank A. Bullock

(Mr. Frank Bullock has been the minister at Chapel Lane Chapel (founded 1672), Bradford, for thirty-two years.)

THIS is not any easy matter to write about objectively, because many of its aspects are deeply personal, thus any ministry depends for its success on the relationship between minister and congregation. This is not capable of exact definition, but certainly means the sense of responsiveness, understanding and trust, growing into deep affection between minister and congregation. My own ministry has been very rich in this response from my people, and I must make grateful acknowledgement of this fact before I can deal with any other aspect of this subject.

How very different one's ministry appears in looking back over the past to what it did at the beginning, forty-four years ago. Had one known all the problems that would emerge during the troubled period of two world wars, with their results in social revolution and unceasing changes in all the ways of life, the even greater revolution in men and women's thoughts and feelings in relation to religion. Had one been aware of all this, how impossible the task would have seemed.

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Fortunately, these emergencies only came into our awareness gradually, and all the time we were sustained by the comradeship of brother ministers and the deep loyalty of our people. Slowly we came to realize that the deep things of the spirit and the religious instincts of men and women have an

enduring quality which can outlast the changing fashions of the world.

For us, as ministers of liberal religion, the greatest challenge arose from the violent reactions against all liberal thought and faith. This perhaps was inevitable in view of the appalling evidence of violent evil revealed in the tragic destructiveness of war, in the loss of millions of lives, and later in the return of the torture chamber and the firing squad as instruments of political compulsion, and the appalling manifestation of hatred against the Jews. Hatred, violence, and cruelty of an unspeakable nature seemed everywhere triumphant. How could we, demanded our critics, still possess any faith in man? To which we could only answer: "What had our critics or we to build upon if that faith were finally lost? If, from the depths of the human soul these great evils arose, was it not also out of the soul of humanity that the forces of healing and redemption arose. Did not human goodness, nobility, and heroism shine with even greater splendour in the darkness? Was it not clear that our faith was finally justified in that there was something of a divine and enduring nature in humanity for us of the liberal faith to build upon?"

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Amid all this there were exciting new discoveries in the realm of science, carrying with them strange new possibilities for good, and perilous possibilities of vast destructiveness. In the post-war years there has also arisen the growth of a new consciousness expressed in literature, art, and music, often of an exciting and bewildering nature. Nor can we ignore exploration in the realm of modern psychology. What had all this to do with the work of the ministry? At first sight, it looked as if our work had little relevance or significance in all this world of bewildering events. Yet, strangely enough, we were sustained by the feeling that in the service of a religious community we were very close to the creative heart of reality. For one thing, in the midst of all these fateful changes the common life of men and women continued, and needed to be sustained by comfort, hope, and courage. Our task, to offer to our people all we can give in the way of personal friendship and to offer some word of guidance, illumination, and interpretation. Hence for me these have always remained the centrality of preaching. Here we have one great asset in our own priceless tradition of intellectual freedom. We are free to inquire, to adjust our minds to the new discoveries in all fields of human activity, but also in that same freedom to draw upon the great universal tradition of religion, especially as it comes to us in the great literature of the Bible and, above all, in the Gospels. This literature was born out of the experience of tragedy and catastrophic change, but through it all there came the sense of the reality of God, of a kingdom of the spirit, and the inspiration of a quenchless hope. Out of that experience men and women not only "endured as seeing Him who is invisible", but went forward to create in the very heart of darkness the conquering power of new life.

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Thus certain realities became increasingly clear and steadfast, the reality of a spiritual life in men and women which can be strengthened in communal prayer and worship, that this spiritual life in us is related to an invisible universal kingdom of God, and in our deepest religious fellowship we are aware of the power of that kingdom. In moments of deep contemplation, we are aware that the kingdom of the spirit is never defeated, but remains within the life of the world, even in the heart of tragedy and catastrophe and in the minds of men, transforming life into new patterns of higher human achievement and possibility towards an ultimate good beyond our present seeing. Ours the privilege and the joy to have been allowed to serve, however humbly, in this vast fellowship of life and the spirit. These are the deepest rewards and hopes for the world which have arisen out of the experience of my ministry.

The Cup and the Ocean

On the bare rock
It is right to walk.
The cup unfilled
Of a dry heart
Is fitting drink
For the unreconciled
That rightly walk
On the bare rock.

Yet, could I walk here
If you were not where
I walk? Could I take
An empty cup now
Did I not hear—
What I can never reach—
The ocean break on that remote beach?

MARGARET DOUGLL

THE CHANGING CHRISTMAS

By E. W. Martin

(Mr. Martin is an author-reader of "The Inquirer", who lives in a Devon village. Two of his most important books are "The Secret People", "Where London Ends".)

IN addition to being the birthday of Christ, the festival of Christmas had — and to some extent retains — a special meaning as our chief family celebration. But during the last few decades this meaning has become secularized. The reasons for this seeming deterioration in our attitude toward Christmas may spring from the changes and tensions of social life reflected through the primary unit of the family.

At the beginning of this century, people in villages were conspicuously religious. Their attendance at church was a social rite: a sign of respectability. But they really valued the way in which Christmas united families and brought news of distant friends. Now the routine of rural celebration is far less individual than it was. Also in the new towns and housing estates, those who are living in new surroundings are taking an economic view of life. All is measured in the atmosphere of a profit and loss account.

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Working-class homes in villages at the beginning of the century were illumined by the bright-eyed expectancy of children. Those children had no regular pocket-money during the course of the year. They got a few coppers if these could be spared from the strained family exchequer. They did not know the joy of holidays; and for them Christmas was a time when imagination could reach out toward the climax of their year.

It is good that our children should not know poverty, but less good that they should lose the power to appreciate small things. There is virtue in frugality, thrift, and the character-building stimulus of a dedication to work. Our Welfare Society is building a generation that depends too much on external authority, on external entertainment, and external security. In the psychological sense, the family has to build its own security, and the festival of Christmas did formerly give people a chance to behave in a fully humane way.

The dignity of man (and woman) is more likely to be sustained in a society that expresses joy, actively and creatively, than in one where there is a dependence on professionalized and commercialized instruments of entertainment. Television, the cinema, organized games played to the scale of profit, tend to rob the individual of his own creativeness.

Some churches would seek from their followers obedience, or the surrender of self. But man cannot surrender himself without losing himself. It is as dangerous to surrender the conscience and judgement to the gospel of commerce (expressed in the sale of Christmas cards that have no Christian meaning and in the red-robed figure of the "Father Christmas" of the stores and shops) as it is to surrender either to any form of Christian or religious propaganda. The man or woman who is true to self will likewise be true to God and neighbour.

Christmas is a time of the year when we are bound to reflect on the need for self-knowledge, for thought, and for values: about the need to see beyond the merely economic and social, so that we can experience the idea of the holy communion which may be found at the heart of all human co-operation when it becomes humane.

The values of urban society—those democratic values which are teaching us to respect both freedom and equality—are being undermined to some extent by the failure to understand the meaning of Christ's life. Christ does not stand with those employers or workers who see no virtue in anything except their narrow politico-economic point of view, adopted for selfish reasons and oriented towards selfish ends.

Christmas means that from the inner security of a real family circle we can pause to remember others: pause to take stock of our immediate surroundings, whether these are made up of a housing estate, a new town, a big industrial city, or a small rural parish. We have experienced a silent social revolution which has transformed the lives of the poor in town and country. But in both the urban and the rural areas now we are in danger of allowing the economic to swamp the spiritual, of putting the world of the football pools and the racing track above that which bears spiritual witness to our common humanity. The Welfare Society will not profit from the philosophy of "getting on" unless there is also a desire in people to understand the full meaning of education.

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Mankind seeks knowledge for its own sake and for the sake of the power it brings. Those who offer presents to little Willie because little Willie ought to be encouraged to pass his eleven-plus examination are being unwise. Presents that are made with that kind of end in view are not presents, they are foolish bribes. We should not allow ourselves to be bribed into selling our birthright for any mess of pottage of whatever kind.

We are what we are, and in our living we have to try to make our actions measure up to the Christian message. How difficult that is in practice; how well-nigh impossible always to be in a state of mind and spirit in which we can think kindly of others. I know that I fail too often in this respect to legislate for others. So also do ministers of religion who succumb, from time to time, to the temptation to be dogmatic, to legislate, to speak with a spiritual authority that it is highly dangerous to assume.

There is no legislation in pointing out what the meaning of Christmas appears to be. It is above all things a forgetfulness of self for the sake of others: never a turning inwards on the self, nor a glorification of the self for the sake of personal indulgence in too much worship or too many good works. Christmas is the time to remember enlightened and disciplined self-sacrifice which can itself capture, if only for a brief moment, those vestiges and hints of divinity which stir in the souls of all people everywhere.

CONGRATULATIONS

Ninetieth Birthday — Mrs. Sydney Martineau

All her many friends will wish to send, through *The Inquirer*, the best birthday greetings to Mrs. Sydney Martineau on her ninetieth birthday, and with their congratulations include all the affection of the Unitarian community.

Wherever Christmas is truly kept

Words of Scripture proper to the Season will be read, in home and school and place of Worship.

That they will be read in over 850 languages is the fruit of the work through 154 years of

THE BRITISH & FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY

Your continued support is asked in order that those still without the Christmas Message in their own tongue may share with you that blessing in 1959.

Bible House, 146 Queen Victoria St., London, E.C.4.

PRESENTATION TO RETIRING EDITOR OF "THE UNITARIAN"

THE REV. ARTHUR W. VALLANCE, B.A., has retired from the editorship of the monthly magazine *The Unitarian* in view of his forthcoming year as President of the General Assembly.

On December 2, at the Council Meeting of the Manchester District Association, which publishes the magazine, a cheque was handed to Mr. Vallance representing contributions from over 400 readers, who had been invited to give individually amounts not exceeding 2s. 6d.

The Rev. T. E. Nuttall, President of the Association, thanking Mr. Vallance for his long service as editor, said the large number of contributions showed how widely his work was appreciated. Mr. Nuttall recalled that he had known Mr. Vallance in 1927, when he had entered the ministry at Pendleton, and he had lost no time in taking on the responsibility for *The Unitarian*, which he had loyally and efficiently carried for twenty-nine years.

The Rev. A. W. Vallance, in responding, said he had enjoyed the work and emphasized the help he had received from the editorial board since its formation ten years ago, and from all who had contributed to the columns of *The Unitarian*. He referred to the fact that his successor, the Rev. Peter B. Godfrey, B.A., was taking over the editorship at the same early stage in his ministry as when he himself had succeeded the first editor, the Rev. H. Bodell Smith.

Presentation to Fraternal Secretary

The Bolton and District Ministers' Fraternal, which represents eighteen of our churches in North-West Lancashire, celebrated a unique occasion at their meeting on December 1 at Bolton. After the usual proceedings, which included an interesting paper from one of the members and the inevitable lively discussion, the members adjourned for tea—not the usual light refreshments, but a real Lancashire spread complete with a birthday cake. This was to celebrate the completion by the Rev. Benjamin Gill of twenty-five years of loyal and devoted service as secretary of the Fraternal.

During these years over sixty of our ministers have learned to appreciate Mr. Gill's unassuming but tireless service, not only to the Fraternal but to all the churches of the district. As a token of their esteem and appreciation of his work, the present members presented him with a travelling case.

Correspondence

Letters should be addressed to the Editor, "The Inquirer", 14 Gordon Square, London, W.C. 1. They should not in general exceed three to four hundred words in length.

Stipends

SIR,—The recent correspondence in *The Inquirer* has again drawn attention to the concern of the laity that the level of stipends has become inadequate to attract recruits to the ministry, or to pay honestly for the services rendered by ministers to their congregations.

That this question is of some urgency will not be disputed, but until a lead is given to the denomination by its central governing body, no action seems likely to be taken.

I believe that there is much goodwill among the laity on this subject, but such goodwill requires to be channelled properly if a satisfactory end is to be achieved. Has not the time come for the G.A. Council to formulate its proposals and give a lead to the whole denomination.

It is surely a council of despair for a denomination to do nothing by admitting the present situation and its attendant difficulties.

Would the G.A. be prepared to give this lead?—Yours,

Birmingham. *A. W. Kenrick.*

[*We are informed by the Secretary of the General Assembly that a committee is inquiring into the whole subject and will report at the February meeting of the Council. This correspondence is now really closed—for the time being.*—EDITOR.]

Spiritualism

SIR,—The Rev. Arthur J. Long has my thanks for his courteous reply to my letter asking him why he considers the spread of Spiritualism "alarming". If I may have the opportunity, I would like to take up two of his points:

1. He states that Spiritualism "fosters the dangerous and misleading assumption that life after death is not very different from life on earth". That is exactly what I do believe. When he and I pass on into the larger life, are we going to join up to a bunch of human freaks? I don't think so. In my view, we shall still be normal human personalities, with our individual characteristics, idiosyncracies, enthusiasms, hobbies—yes, and surely our faults, too; for it is our faults that are often the most lovable things about us!

2. Mr. Long later writes: "I have yet to be persuaded that most, if not all, of the so-called psychic phenomena are not capable of a naturalistic explanation". Well, of course they are, just because they are in accordance with nature. Life is a unity, and there is one universe. And it is within this universe—God's universe—that psychic phenomena occur.

And finally, the Resurrection of Jesus. That surely was either a subjective vision on the experience of his friends, or it was a "materialization". I think that either explanation is reasonable.

I feel that as Modernists we should keep our minds wide open on this most important subject.—Yours,

Worthing. *Malcolm Ruth.*

SIR,—Whatever may be said against Spiritualism (and there is much that can be said, and many who are eager to say it), it cannot be denied that it has converted thousands of atheists and materialists to a belief in God and a spiritual interpretation of life and the universe. Is not this a gain? If I were looking round for something to be alarmed about, I would choose the spread of materialism rather than of somebody else's religion.

"In things essential, Unity; in things doubtful, Liberty; in all things, Charity." Spiritualists have the essentials; their "seven points" are very much like our "Essentials of the Christian Faith". Like us, they claim liberty, though they have had a harder fight for it than we have; let us treat them with charity.—Yours,

London, S.W.16. *Wm. Spooner.*

SIR,—As an inquirer, may I ask Arthur J. Long to tell us what is the naturalistic explanation of such phenomena as telepathy, pre-cognition, materialization.

Does "naturalistic" cover more than our five senses are fitted to tell us?

I am interested in psychical research, but not a Spiritualist.—Yours,

Herst-mon-Ceux, E. Sussex. *William A. Wharton.*

"A Banner Should be Flown"

SIR,—I have recently seen a correspondent's suggestion that the Unitarian movement should have some kind of a badge or emblem for focusing attention on our identity. I agree that this would be one way of consolidating ourselves in our own and the public mind. My recent impressions of American Unitarianism remind me very strongly of the excellent publicity one saw on behalf of Unitarian Churches.

"The Church in Wales" is at present conducting a campaign for "Faith and Family" and all parishioners are wearing a lapel badge—young and old alike, announcing thus their participation in this enterprise. May I further suggest a banner should be flown from a front window of Essex Hall as at 25 Beacon Street, Boston, U.S.A., announcing the existence of a Unitarian H.Q.—Yours,

Pontypridd. *Dorothy Lloyd.*

A Christmas Appeal

SIR,—As the Christmas season comes round again, may I remind our friends that the work of the Bell Street Mission, London, goes on, and we shall be very pleased if they will remember to give us their support at this time? We are grateful to the many friends who help in a practical way by sending donations to the missionary's funds, and I am deeply conscious of the invaluable support given to me in "my ministry at large" in this area during the past thirty-six years. It is inevitable that old and valued supporters drop out as the years go by, and we would welcome the help of new friends. With thanks and the season's greetings.—Yours,

28 Bell Street, London, N.W.1. *Walter M. Long.*

SIMPLEX ENVELOPE SCHEME

THE Secretary of the Assembly received a very encouraging letter the other day which enclosed the contributions of members of a small cause to the General Assembly under the Simplex Envelope Scheme. In sending these, the secretary of the congregation ended his letter with:

"We would like to express our own satisfaction of this method of raising funds. For instance, we know that our cheque practically doubles previous donations raised as retiring collections. In other words, if we can maintain our present standards it will mean that G.A. funds will get a 300 per cent increase from our church. We hope that our case will give you heart to press the scheme further. It certainly looks the way out of our financial maze."

We can add that no church so far reports that the contributions to its own funds have decreased as a result of adopting the scheme; on the contrary, several report welcome increases. Isn't it time all churches thought the matter over again? Particulars can be obtained from: The Secretary, The General Assembly, Essex Hall, Essex Street, London, W.C.2.

J.K.

THE CALENDAR OF THE CHURCHES

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1958

ABERDEEN, Unitarian Church, Skene Street, 11 and 6, Rev. W. B. Tavener
ABERYSTWYTH, New Street Meeting House, 11, Mr. T. Elwyn Nicholas
ALTRINCHAM, Dunham Road Chapel, 11 and 6.30, Rev. A. W. Vallance
AINSWORTH, Unitarian Church, Knowsley Road, 11.15 and 3, Rev. B. Gill
ASTLEY, Unitarian Chapel, Manchester Road, 6.30, Supply
BATH, Trim Street Chapel, Unitarian, 6.30, Rev. S. Spencer
BELFAST, All Souls, Elmwood Avenue, 11.30 and 7, Dr. A. L. Agnew
BELFAST, First Church, Rosemary Street, 11.30 and 7, Dr. H. J. McLachlan
BESSELS GREEN (nr. Sevenoaks), Unitarian Church, 11, Rev. R. Taylor
BILLINGSHURST, Free Church, High Street, 11, Rev. Dudley Richards
BIRKENHEAD, Unitarian Church, Bessborough Road, 6.30 (December 21), Rev. Maurice Johnson
BIRMINGHAM, Church of Messiah, Broad Street, 11 and 6.30, Rev. Gordon Stuart
BIRMINGHAM, Waverley Road Church, and Hurst Street Mission, Small Heath, 6.30, Dr. D. C. [illegible]
BLACKPOOL, North Shore, Dickson Road, 10.45 and 6.30, Mr. E. A. West
BLACKPOOL, South Shore, Lytham Road, 11 and 6.30, Mr. Frank Lowe
BOLTON, Bank Street, 2.30, Sunday School, 10.30 and 6.30, Rev. E. Shirvell Price
BOLTON, Unity Church, Deane Road, 10.30 and 6.30, Rev. Arthur J. Long
BOSTON (Lincs.), Unitarian Chapel, Spain Lane, 6.30, Rev. Henry Hall
BOURNEMOUTH, Unitarian Church, West Hill Road, 11, Rev. Lawrence Redfern
BRADFORD, Broadway Avenue, 2.45, Pageant
BRADFORD, Town Hall Square, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. Frank A. Bullock
BRIDGWATER, Christ Church, Dampiet Street, 3, Sunday School, 6.30, Rev. Wm. Millar
BRIDPORT, Unitarian Chapel, 11 and 6.30, Rev. G. Randall Jones
BRIGHTON, Christ Church, Unitarian, New Road, 11 and 6.30, Rev. John Rowland
BRISTOL, Lewin's Mead Meeting, 6.30, Rev. A. H. Butler
BRISTOL, Oakfield Road, 11, Rev. A. H. Butler, 6.30, Mr. R. L. Nicholson
BURNLEY, Unitarian Church, Trafalgar Street, 3, Rev. L. Hallsworth
BURY, Bank Street, 11 and 6.30, Rev. Kenneth Twinn
CAMBRIDGE, Memorial Church, Emmanuel Road, 11 and 6, Rev. H. Stewart Carter
CARDIFF, The West Grove Unitarian Church, 3.30 (Welsh) and 6.30, Rev. Roy John
CHATHAM, The Church of the Great Companions, Hammond Hill, 3, Mr. John Pickstone
CHELTENHAM, Bayshill Unitarian Church, Royal Well, 10.30, Sunday School, 11 and 6.30, Rev. John M. Quine
CHESTER, Matthew Henry's Chapel, Trinity Street, 11, Mr. A. Wynne, 6.30, Miss R. Hereford
CHESTERFIELD, Elder Yard Church, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. Ernest Shaw
CHOWBENT CHAPEL, Atherton, 10.45 and 6.30, —
COVENTRY, Great Meeting House, Holyhead Road, 11, and 6.30 Rev. E. H. Morris
CREWE, Free Christian Church, Beech Street, 6.30, Supply
CREWKERNE, Unitarian Church, Hermitage Street, 11 and 6.30, Mrs. M. R. Dicken
CROYDON, Free Christian Church, Wellesley Road, 11, Rev. E. G. Lee
DENTON, Wilton Street Chapel, 11, Children's Chapel, 6.30, Rev. Fred Cottier
DERBY, Friar Gate Unitarian Chapel, 6.30, Rev. C. G. Bolam
DITCHLING, Old Meeting House, 10.45, Rev. Basil Viney
DONCASTER, Free Christian Church, Hall Gate, Rev. E. A. Davies, 6.30, Rev. Ada Tonkin
DOVER, Adrian Street, Unitarian Church, 11, Sunday School, 6.30, Rev. Philip C. Wiseman
DUBLIN, Stephen's Green, West, 11.30 and 7.30, Rev. E. Savell Hicks
DUDLEY, Old Meeting House, Wolverhampton Street, 11 and 6.30, Supply
DUKINFIELD, Old Chapel, Chapel Hill, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. S. P. Whitehouse
DUNDEE, Unitarian Church, 33 Constitution Road, 11, Rev. G. D. Forty
EDINBURGH, St. Mark's Church, Castle Terrace, 11 and 6.30, Rev. Bruce Findlow
EXETER, George's Chapel, South Street, 6.30, Rev. Dr. F. D. Meyer-Kluger
GEE CROSS, Hyde Chapel, 11 and 6.30, Rev. J. Harry Smith
GLASGOW, St. Vincent Street, Unitarian Church, 11, Mr. Kenneth J. Street
[illegible], Street, 2, Sunday School, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. W. H. Corbell
GLOUCESTER, Barton Street, 3, Rev. J. M. Quine
GUILDFORD, Ward Street Church, 11.15, Rev. R. Nicol Cross
HALE CHAPEL, Hale Barns, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. G. J. Pryce
HALIFAX, Northgate End, 3, Rev. J. B. Tonkin
HASTINGS, Free Christian Church, South Terrace, 11 and 6.30, Rev. Dennis Hilton
HINCKLEY, Great Meeting, Baines Lane, 11 and 6, Supply
HORSHAM, Worthing Road, 11, Rev. J. Martin Hall
HUDDERSFIELD, Fitzwilliam Street, 6, Rev. J. S. Patrick
HULL, Park Street Church (Unitarian), 6.30, Rev. Geoffrey Penn
KENDAL, Market Place, Unitarian Chapel, 6.30, Rev. T. M. Waddle
KIDDERMINSTER, New Meeting House, 11 and 6.30, Rev. Edgar W. Hill
KNUTSFORD, Brook Street Chapel, 11 and 6.30, Rev. Albert Smith
LANCASTER, St. Nicholas Street Church, 6.30, Supply
LEEDS, Mill Hill Chapel, City Square, 10.45 Rev. Brian Golland, 6.30, Rev. John [illegible]
LEICESTER, Narborough Road, 11, Junior Church, 6.30, Mr. C. V. Walters
LEICESTER, The Great Meeting, East Bond Street, 11 and 6.30, Rev. Leonard Mason
LEWES, Westgate Chapel, 11.15, Rev. W. Waddington
LINCOLN, High Street, Unitarian Chapel, 6.30, Rev. H. W. Kendall
LIVERPOOL, Ancient Chapel of Toxteth, 11 and 6.30, Dr. P. N. Tindall
LIVERPOOL, Bootle Free Church, 11, Rev. C. A. Piper
LIVERPOOL, Domestic Mission, Mill Street, 6.30, Rev. J. Kerr Murray
LIVERPOOL, Gateacre Chapel, 11, Rev. Stanley R. Butler
LIVERPOOL, Hamilton Road, Everton, 3, Sunday School, 6.30, Rev. C. A. Piper
LIVERPOOL, Hope Street, 6.30, Rev. A. Williams
LIVERPOOL, Ullet Road, 11 and 6.30, Rev. E. B. Storr
LONDON, Bell Street, Edgware Road, 6, Rev. Walter M. Long
LONDON, Blackfriars Mission and Stamford Street Chapel, 6.30, Mr. John Wilson
LONDON, Brixton, Effra Road, 11, —
LONDON, Essex Church, Palace Gardens Terrace, Notting Hill Gate, 11 and 6.30, Rev. Graham Short
LONDON, Forest Gate, Upton Lane, 6.30, Rev. T. E. Dalton
LONDON, Golders Green, Hoop Lane, 11 and 6.30, Rev. K. C. Treacher
LONDON, Hackney, New Gravel Pit Church, Chatham Place, 6.30, Rev. R. E. Cartwright (also 11, 1st Sunday in the month)
LONDON, Hampstead, Rosslyn Hill, 11, Rev. Duncan P. Mars
LONDON, Highgate Hill Unitarian Church, 11, Mr. Ivan Knowles
LONDON, Ilford High Road, 11, Rev. T. E. Dalton, 6.30, Dr. Dorothy Tarrant
LONDON, Islington, Upper Street, Prebend Hall, 6.30, Rev. A. V. Fox
LONDON, Kilburn Unitarian Christian Church, Quex Road, 11, Rev. A. V. Fox
LONDON, Lewisham Unitarian Church, High Street, 11, Mr. J. Brown
LONDON, Leytonstone, Lea Bridge Road, Leyton Green, 6.30, Rev. F. Hankinson
LONDON, Mansford Street Church, Bethnal Green, 6.30, Mr. Kevin Hill
LONDON, Richmond Free Church, Ormond Road, 11, Rev. Walter M. Long
LONDON, Stratford, West Ham Lane, Unitarian Church, 10.30, Children's Church, 6.30, Rev. Arthur Peacock
LONDON, Wandsworth Unitarian Church, East Hill, 11, Rev. Arthur Peacock (also 6.30, 1st Sunday in the month)
LONDON, Welsh Unitarian Church at Highgate Hill Unitarian Church, 1st and 3rd Sundays, 6, Rev. T. L. Jones
LONDON, Wood Green, Unity Church, Newnham Road, 6.30, Rev. John Kielty
LYTHAM ST. ANNES (Ansdell), Channing Road, 11, Student
MACCLESFIELD, King Edward Street, 10.45 and 6.30, Supply
MAIDSTONE, Unitarian Church, Market Buildings, 6.30, Mrs. Muriel Hilton
MANCHESTER, Blackley Unitarian Church, Chapel Lane, 6.30, Rev. David C. Doel
MANCHESTER, Cross Street Chapel, 10.45 and 6.30, Dr. E. W. Webb
MANCHESTER, Gorton, Brookfield Church, Hyde Road, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. Maurice Rudge
MANCHESTER, Monton Church, Eccles, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. W. Hill Warring
MANCHESTER, Pendleton Unitarian, Cross Lane, 6.30, Rev. T. W. Roberts
MANCHESTER, Platt Chapel, Rusholme, 6.30, Mr. Wm. McMillan
MANCHESTER, Renshaw Street Mission, 6.30, Rev. B. L. Hopkin
MANCHESTER, Stand Chapel, Whitefield (December 21), 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. Sydney H. Knight
MANCHESTER, Wilbraham Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, 11, Mr. Philip M. Brown
MANCHESTER, Wythenshawe, Unitarian Church, Brownley Road, Benchill, 6.30, Rev. John Gill
MANSFIELD, Old Meeting House, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. Kenneth Sherratt
MARPLE, Unitarian Hall, 21 Stockport Road, 11 each Sunday
MIDDLESBROUGH, Free Christian Church, 6.30, Rev. E. A. Davies
MIDDLETON, Old Road Chapel, 3.15, Rev. David C. Doel
MORETONHAMPSTEAD, 3 and Newton Abbot, 6.30, Rev. C. G. Toase
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE, The Church of the Divine Unity, Ellison Place, 11 and 6.30, Rev. John Storey
NEWCHURCH (Rossendale), Bethlehem Unitarian Church, 10.30 and 6, Rev. John Mather
NORTHAMPTON, Kettering Road Church, 6.30, Mr. G. Wilkinson
NORWICH, Octagon Chapel, Colegate, 11, Rev. J. A. Kennedy
NOTTINGHAM, High Pavement Chapel, 10.45, Rev. C. Gordon Bolam, 6.30, Carol Service
OLDBURY, Unitarian Church, Birmingham Street, 11 and 6.30, Rev. Harold A. Gore
OLDHAM, Lord Street Chapel, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. T. E. Nuttall
OXFORD, Manchester College Chapel, 11.30, The Rev. The Principal
PADIHAM, Nazareth Unitarian Church, Knight Hill, 10.30 and 6, Rev. L. Hallsworth
PARK LANE CHAPEL, near Wigan, 11 and 6.30, Rev. Gordon L. Clarke
PLYMOUTH, Unitarian Church, Notte Street, 11 and 6.30, Rev. E. H. Kemsley
POOLE, Unitarian Church, Hill Street, 11, Junior Church, 6.30, Rev. J. W. Dumble
PORTSMOUTH, John Pounds Memorial Church, High Street, 11, Junior Church, 6.30, Mr. J. R. Symonds
PRESTON, Unitarian Chapel, Church Street, 6.30, Student
RINGWOOD, Hants., The Meeting House, 6.30, Rev. Francis Terry
RIVINGTON CHAPEL, Nr. Horwich, Lancs., 3, Rev. R. I. Pritchard
ROCHDALE, Blackwater Street, 10.30 and 6, Rev. F. W. Barr
ROTHERHAM, Church of Our Father, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. E. Phillips
SALE, Atkinson Road, 11, Rev. John Gill
SCARBOROUGH, Unitarian Church, Westborough, 6.30, Rev. G. W. Parkinson
SHEFFIELD (Attercliffe), 6.30, Mr. H. Brearley
SHEFFIELD, Fulwood Old Chapel, 11, Rev. F. Sorrell
SHEFFIELD, Unity Church, Crookesmoor Road, 11 and 6.30, Rev. E. D. Davies
SHEFFIELD, Upper Chapel, 11 and 6.30, Rev. G. Stanley Whitby
SHREWSBURY, High Street, Unitarian, 11 and 6.30, Supply
SIDMOUTH, Old Meeting, Unitarian, High Street, 11 and 6.30, Rev. H. Whitaker
SOUTHAMPTON, Church of the Saviour, London Road, 6.30, Rev. Lawrence Redfern
SOUTHEND-ON-SEA, Darnley Road, 6.30, Mr. S. R. Martin
SOUTHPORT, Portland Street Church, 11 and 6.30, Rev. T. J. Jones
STOCKPORT, Unitarian Church, St. Peter's Gate, 10.30 and 6.30, Rev. J. B. Blackburn
ST. HELENS, Corporation Street, 6.30, Mr. G. Craig
STOCKTON-ON-TEES, Wellington Street, 6.30, Mr. J. Harold Cobb (also 11, 2nd Sunday in the month)
STOURBRIDGE, Presbyterian Unitarian Chapel, 11, Rev. C. Simpson
SWANSEA, Unitarian Church, High Street, 6.30, Supply (also 11, First Sunday in the month)
SWANSEA, Pentrepoeth Free Christian Meeting House, 11, Supply
SWINTON, Swinton Hall Road, 10.45, Student, 6.30, Rev. P. B. Godfrey
TAUNTON, Mary St. Chapel, 11, Rev. Wm. Millar
TENTERDEN, Old Meeting House, Ashford Road, 6.30, Rev. G. Kemble
TODMORDEN, Unitarian Church, 10.45 and 6, Rev. Alec L. Foskew
TORQUAY, Unity Church, Montpellier Road, 11 and 6.30, Rev. Charles Eaton
TROWBRIDGE, Conigre Unitarian Church, 11, Rev. S. Spencer
WAKEFIELD, [illegible] Street, 10.30 and 6.30, Rev. Eric Wild
WATFORD, Friends' House, Church Road (by permission), 7.30 (last Sunday in the month)
WALLASEY, Memorial Church, Manor Road, 11, Devotional Service, 6.30, Supply
WALSALL, Unitarian Free Church, Stafford Street, 11, Rev. R. J. Williamson, 2.30, Sunday School
WEST BROMWICH, Lodge Road, 11, Children's Church, 6.15, Rev. R. J. Williamson
WEST KIRBY, Brookfield Gardens, 11, Rev. Maurice Johnson (also 6.30, first Sunday in the month)
WHITBY, Flowergate, 2.30, Rev. G. W. Parkinson
WILMSLOW, Dean Row, 10.45, Rev. A. B. Downing, Styal, 6.30, Rev. A. B. Downing
YORK, St. Saviourgate Chapel, 6.30, Mr. J. Walker
THE NATIONAL UNITARIAN FELLOWSHIP provides for those unable to attend a Unitarian Church. For information write to the Secretary, N.U.F., Essex Hall, 1-6 Essex Street, Strand, London, W.C.2.

AUSTRALIA

ADELAIDE, Unitarian Christian Church, Wakefield St., 11 and 7, Rev. Colin Gibson
MELBOURNE, Unitarian Church, Cathedral Place, C.2: Unitarian Half-Hour broadcast, 4.15. Services: 4 p.m., second Sunday in each month, Evening 7 p.m. Rev. V. James
PERTH, Western Australia, Unitarian Free Christian Fellowship, Rev. R. H. Fleetwood, 132 Duke Street, Scarborough, West Australia
SYDNEY, New South Wales, Unitarian Church, 15 Francis Street (off College St.) 7.15, Rev. D. W. Everson, Manse Telephone LX 5020
UNITARIAN FELLOWSHIP OF AUSTRALIA, 1 Coles Alley, Melbourne, C.1. Minister: Rev. W. Bottomley. Meetings as advertised.
[illegible] COMMUNITY CHURCH, [illegible] Road, [illegible] (Vic.). S.S. weekly at 2.15 p.m. Public Worship, fortnightly, 7.15 p.m. Minister: Rev. W. Bottomley

CANADA

MONTREAL, Church of the Messiah, Sherbrooke Street West and Simpson Street, 11, Rev. Angus Cameron
TORONTO, First Unitarian Church, 175 St. Clair Avenue West, 11, Rev. W. P. Jenkins
VANCOUVER, B.C., Unitarian Church of Vancouver, 1,550 Tenth Avenue West, 11, Rev. A. P. Hewett

NEW ZEALAND

AUCKLAND, Unitarian Church, Ponsonby Road, 11 and 7, Mr. H. J. Wilson
WELLINGTON, Service suspended — Enquiries — Miss Warren, Tel. 40-252

SOUTH AFRICA

CAPE TOWN, Hout Street, 11, Sunday School; 7, Service, Rev. Maurice C. [illegible]

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THE INQUIRER

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Death

Mills—On December 8, 1958, Mary Theodora Mills, of Lowmandale, Leckhampton Road, Cheltenham, daughter of Ruth Flower, of Liverpool and Cheltenham, and of Charles Frederick Mills, of Cheltenham.

Sir Adrian Boult at Glasgow

On Sunday, November 23, there was a very successful evening service, conducted by the chairman, Mr. H. S. Wylie, who gave readings on the subject of music. Orchestral interludes were given by the Unitarian Youth Orchestra, now some 35 strong and complete with bass fiddles, tympani, woodwind and brass, besides a full complement of strings. The orchestra rendered items by Cimarosa and Mozart. At the conclusion of the service, Sir Adrian Boult took the platform, gave a word of appreciation to the orchestra and proceeded to answer questions on the subject of music.

The occasion proved to be inspiring, informative and warmly social in its character. At the conclusion thanks were given to Sir Adrian Boult for his kindness in sparing from his very full diary the time to give the Unitarian Youth Orchestra the benefit of his advice, experience and reminiscences.

New Editor

The Inquirer sends congratulations to the Rev. Peter Godfrey, of Swinton, on taking over the editorship of *The Unitarian*.

Mr. Ronald Jones — Out of Hospital

We are glad to report that Mr. Ronald Jones, the Treasurer of the General Assembly, is out of hospital after his serious accident, and is staying with the Rev. and Mrs. Stewart Carter in Cambridge.

Posters and Flags

Doncaster: On Saturday, November 22, the annual bazaar took the form of an "International Fair". The Chairman of the Church Committee, Mr. W. Lomax, after hymn and prayer, in a few felicitous sentences, introduced Mrs. E. B. Norman (she has been a good friend of the church through many years) who followed with a most appropriate address paying high tribute to the Sewing Ladies, all Stall-Holders and the ladies of the tea room for their untiring labours for the church.

Posters and flags of the various countries arranged around the stalls gave the interior of the hall a truly international aspect and colour.

If the devoted spirit revealed at this annual bazaar, which raised over £311 for church funds, continues to prevail, there exists every hope for the future witness of the Doncaster Free Christian Church.

Knutsford: Their many friends will be happy to know that Joan, the only daughter of the Rev. and Mrs. Albert Smith, Brook Street Chapel, has successfully passed her S.R.N. examinations at Manchester Royal Infirmary following her three years' training there and has also gained her Hospital Medal. Joan is an old girl of Channing School.

Mrs. Emily Dyer

On November 28, 1958, Emily Dyer, wife of the Moderator of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland, the Right Rev. J. William Dyer, passed peacefully to rest after a long illness. A Memorial Service was held on December 1 in the Killinchy Meeting House, attended by a large congregation of ministers and layfolk, and conducted by the Rev. Dr. John McLachlan, prior to cremation at Liverpool.

Emily Dyer hailed from Tynemouth and early in life answered the call to serve her fellowmen. She was trained, and served for some years, as a Deaconess in the Methodist Connexion. Like the prophet of old, she heard the voice of God saying, "Whom shall I send and who will go for us?" and in her own quiet, modest way she said: "Here am I; send me". It was the inner voice of quiet conviction that spoke to her, and continued so to speak all the days of her fully-conscious life. To heal and save mankind, to bear witness to the unfailing Love of God was the bread and water of her being.

On her marriage, she settled in a mining village in the Yorkshire coalfield. Here, human needs were never far from her thoughts. So disturbed was she by the dreadful conditions under which many women had to live and work in those parts that she founded a local Nursing Association. And when she and her husband left Goldthorpe in 1926, the year of the Great Strike, the miners' wives gave their precious pennies to buy a fruit-bowl as a thank-offering.

In the following year she went with her husband to the Longsight Free Christian Church. In 1933 the Dyers moved to Unity Church, Sheffield, where she became President of the District Women's League. Later, in Great Hucklow and Bunson, and again in Manchester, she was a loyal helpmeet to her husband. Then came the first signs of the long illness which clouded her closing years. Nonetheless, equable, sweet, and uncomplaining, she went her way.

Emily Dyer died some years ago, even though her form still lingered on. What we remember, in saying farewell to the mortal part of her, is the immortal part, the colours of life that never fade.

H. J. Mel.

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